



Education

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IN THIS ISSUE:
EDUCATION DECISION-MAKER SEE PAGE 3

Countdown to School

Get Ready

Gather the documents you will need to enroll your child in school.

Call your school district office to ask exactly what school the children in your home will attend.

Call the school registrar at the assigned school and ask:

- When is school enrollment?
- What documents do I need?
- Contact information for the director of Special Education to begin services if needed.

For the initial enrollment in a new school district, you will need:

- ✓ Withdrawal form from the last school the child attended

- ✓ (DFPS) Form 2085 E -Education Decision-Maker
- ✓ medical Consent
- Doctor's orders on any medications taken at school
- ✓ Birth certificate
- ✓ Immunization record
- Documents for special education and Section 504 services
- ✓ School transcripts
- Court orders establishing DFPS custody, by request

Get Set

Complete the paperwork - Form 2085 establishes your role as caregiver and the child's eligibility for the free National School Lunch Program.

Form 2085E names the person, usually the caregiver, responsible for making education-related decisions.

Visit the school. Where's the cafeteria? Where's the bathroom? Where do I get the bus?

Meet the teacher. Take the opportunity to meet the teacher, school staff, and classmates.

Establish communications and access school portals. You can check your child's daily class progress, grades and upcoming events.

GO!!!!!

"Opt out" in writing of the school using corporal punishment on your child

Get back into the school routine. That means eight to 10 hours of uninterrupted sleep a night for youth and children. Start setting bedtime hour two weeks before school begins.

Practice the route to school or what bus to take. Review the school rules with the child.

EDUCATION | Issue #1

Early childhood education programs provide short-term and long-term opportunities for young children to develop math and language abilities, learn appropriate social interactions, reduce placement in special education settings, and achieve better education outcomes throughout their school years.



Head Start Programs

Head Start and Early Head Start are federally-funded early childhood education programs available in many communities for children under the age of 5. The two types of eligibility are incomebased and categorical. Children in foster care are categorically eligible for Head Start (ages 3-5) and Early Head Start (ages o-3), but any child may be put on a waiting list because of enrollment capacity.

Pre-kindergarten and early childhood education programs at the local public school or through Head Start may not be available in the local community or appropriate for each child.

For a Head Start or Early Head Start program near you, see http://www.txhsa.org/

Pre-kindergarten
Programs for Children
ages 3, 4, and 5

Children ages 3, 4, and 5 who are in or were ever in the conservatorship of DFPS as a result of an adversary hearing are eligible for the free pre-kindergarten programs offered through many Texas public schools.

Texas Education Code §29.153

In general, children must be 4-years-old on or before September 1 to be eligible to enroll for a 4-year-old pre-kindergarten program at a local public school.

Caregivers must secure a Letter of Verification from the DFPS regional education specialist for school enrollment. Contact the local school district for enrollment policies.

Information on prekindergarten programs offered at local public schools and Head Start programs may be obtained from the CPS regional child care coordinator. Questions on child care options should be directed to the CPS regional child care coordinator.



Things you can do to improve your child's reading

- 1. Talk with your child. When you talk to your child, you're helping him or her to learn words.
- 2. Read to your children. Let your child pick a book before nap or bedtime.



- 3. Ask an older child to read to a younger child. Older children will be proud of their reading skills and younger children will want to read like the older child.
- 4. Practice word games in the car, when you shop for groceries, or reading a menu.
- 5. Let your child see you read. This is the best way for them to see reading is important!

Go to <u>www.rif.org</u> for more information on reading

EDUCATION | Issue #1

EDUCATION **DECISION-MAKER**

Role and Responsibilities

What is an Education Decision-Maker?

The Education Decision-Maker is the person who is responsible for making the day-to-day education-related decisions for a child or youth in DFPS conservatorship.

Who can be designated as an Education Decision-Maker?

The caseworker considers who can best represent the child in making day-to-day education-related decisions. The Education Decision-Maker will most likely be the caregiver for the child or youth.

Who needs an Education Decision-Maker?

All children and youth in DFPS conservatorship, including Kinship, who attend Texas public or private schools K-12, children who are in pre-K programs at local public schools, charter schools, Pre-kindergarten Programs for Children with Disabilities (PPCD), or participate in a nontraditional program such as homeschooling or online programs.

Who makes the education decisions for a child or youth receiving special education services?

A surrogate parent* is appointed by the school or the court to make special-education decisions for the child or youth. Training must be completed within 90 days of appointment.

* Surrogate parent may not be an employee of a child welfare agency, Texas Education Agency, the school, or residential facility.



The Education Decision-Maker is generally responsible for:

- Enrolling the child in school and provide necessary documents such as immunization records and school transcripts
- Signing the "opt out" of corporal punishment slip at school
- ✓ Conferring with the child or youth on course selection
- Approving the child's participation in routine and non-routine school activities, such as field trips and afterschool tutoring
- Giving permission to enroll the child in special programs such as Bilingual Education and Gifted and Talented
- Receiving and signing report cards, permission slips, dayto-day activities
- Accessing school records, attending parent-teacher conferences, Parent's Night
- Informing the caseworker of child's disciplinary actions by the school that may result in a disciplinary hearing, manifestation determination review, truancy, suspension, expulsion, or removal to a DAEP or JJAEP program.

In addition, the Education Decision-Maker:

- * Reviews the child's Education Portfolio
- * Signs the Student Code of Conduct and assists the youth with understanding the Code of Conduct
- * Provides updates, notes, forms, and records to the caseworker
- * Notifies the caseworker of significant education-related activities

If the caregiver is named as Education Decision-Maker Form 2085E, the caregiver will ensure that this form has been provided to the school within five days of being named as education decision-maker.





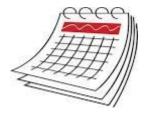
EDUCATION | Issue #1

The shift in student assessment

TAKS to STARR



12th grade students were the last to take the TAKS test in the 2013-14 school year.



Out of the 180 annual instructional days, students typically spend two to five days taking state-required tests, depending on their grade.

$15 \gg 5$

In 2013, the Texas Legislature decreased the number of state-required tests for high school students from 15 to five.

2014 is the first year students will only be required to take five tests

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What is STAAR?

The State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) replaces the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test beginning in the 2014-2015 school year for all school districts. Students in DFPS conservatorship must complete STAAR assessments.

How is STAAR different from TAKS?

- STAAR is longer, more difficult, and cognitively complex
- STAAR has time limits English I and II must be completed in five hours; all other tests must be competed in four hours
- STAAR has more open-ended questions in science and mathematics to encourage more independent answers
- STAAR requires high school students to complete End of Course (EOC) assessments whenever they take the corresponding course
- STAAR requires two writing tasks instead of one
- STAAR better measures student progress in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

STAAR Calendar

Subject Area	Grade Administered In
Reading	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Math	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11
Writing	4, 7
Science	5, 8
Social Studies	8

The Texas Education Agency <u>website</u> provides previous versions of the test and sample questions.